The Examiner identified Groups I and II as being within the same class, but different subclasses. Thus, the search and examination of these two Groups would not be overly burdensome. Furthermore, the different classification of the claims is not necessarily an indication of the distinctiveness of Groups I and II from Group III. Art relevant to the claims of Groups I and II may be found in the class/subclass associated with Group III and vice versa.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn and that all claims be allowed for further prosecution in the same application. In the event that the requirement is made final, and in order to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.143, Applicant reaffirms the election of claims 1-15 and 18-25 (Group I), holding the remaining claims (Groups II and III) in abeyance under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.142(b) until final disposition of the elected claims.

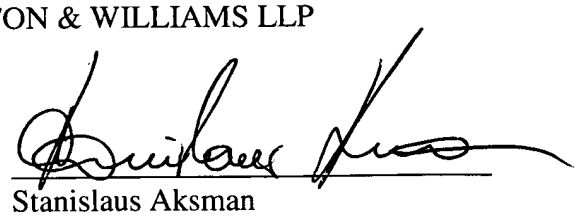
CONCLUSION

For all the reasons detailed above, all claims in this application are in condition for allowance, an indication of which is solicited. In the event any outstanding issues remain, Applicants would appreciate a telephone call to the undersigned counsel to resolve such issues in an expeditious and effective manner to place the application in condition for allowance.

Applicants believe no additional fees are required. However, in the event of any variance between the amount enclosed and the fees determined by the PTO, please charge or credit any such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 50-0206.

Respectfully submitted,
HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP

Date: January 6, 2005

By: 

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